



The United  
States Department  
of Agriculture

The mission of the U.S. Department of Agriculture is to enhance the quality of life for the American people by supporting production agriculture; ensuring safe, affordable, nutritious, and accessible food supply; caring for agricultural, forest, and range lands; supporting rural communities' sound development; providing economic opportunities for farm and rural residents; expanding global markets for agriculture and forest products and services; and working to reduce hunger in America and throughout the world.

## VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

### Office of the General Counsel Atlanta, GA Regional Office

**POSITION:** Paralegal Specialist      **ANNOUNCEMENT NO:** OGC-03-11  
GS-950-5/7/9

**OPEN:** July 22, 2003      **CLOSES:** August 21, 2003

**SALARY:** GS-5: \$25,985 - \$33,777  
GS-7: \$32,188 - \$41,845  
GS-9: \$39,373 - \$51,185

**DUTY LOCATION:** Atlanta, GA

**VACANCIES:** 1

**THIS ANNOUNCEMENT IS OPEN OGC-WIDE ONLY:** This position is open to current career-conditional or career OGC employees only.

**SUMMARY OF DUTIES:** The incumbent serves as a paralegal specialist in the Office of the General Counsel (OGC), Atlanta, Georgia Regional Office. If selected at the entry level, the incumbent will serve as a trainee, developing to the journeyman level.

The paralegal specialist performs the following duties:

Analyzes, and evaluates case files against case litigation worthiness; collects and compiles statistical reports concerning casework; reviews and analyzes statistics relevant to particular cases; writes and submits referral letters to the Department of Justice and writes proposed pleadings; notes and corrects case file deficiencies; performs legal research for case under consideration; presents case summaries to attorneys; gathers, sorts, classifies, and interprets information that is relevant to, or documents that are used in, cases that are litigated; interviews potential witnesses; provides technical advice to client agencies regarding factual and legal questions; selects, assembles, analyzes, summarizes and compiles information on client agency regulations, procedures, policies and forms.

**BASIC ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:** Experience that equipped the applicants with the particulate knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSA's) to perform successfully the duties of the position, and that is typically in or related to the work of the position to be filled. Applicants must have a minimum of 52 weeks of specialized experience performing duties in the actual type of work for which application is being made. To be creditable, specialized experience must have been equivalent to at least the next lower grade level.

**ADDITIONAL EVALUATION CRITERIA:** On a separate sheet of paper describe and list all your experience, education, training, and related recognition (awards, performance reviews, etc.) that describes your background for each of the following knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSA's) listed below. Each written KSA response will be evaluated separately. Your KSA responses will be considered as your Supplemental Statement for your application for this position.

KSA #1. Knowledge of Federal laws and statutes pertaining to the work of the office.

KSA #2. Ability to analyze materials and arrive at conclusions.

KSA #3. Ability to communicate orally and in writing.

KSA #4. Ability to interpret and apply laws, regulations, and precedents.

THE EVALUATION OF RESPONSES TO THESE KSA's MAY INFLUENCE OR DETERMINE WHICH APPLICATIONS ARE FORWARDED TO SELECTING OFFICIALS. THE ASSESSMENT OF BASIC APPLICATION MATERIALS AND THE RESPONSES TO KSA's ARE USED TO DEVELOP RELATIVE RATINGS AND RANKINGS OF APPLICANTS.

#### **HOW TO APPLY: SUBMIT THE FOLLOWING**

\* **A resume, or OF-612** (optional Application for Federal Employment), or any written application. Be sure to indicate the **Vacancy Announcement Number**. Electronic versions of the OF-612 and an on-line resume builder may be accessed at <http://www.usajobs.opm.gov>

#### **AND**

\* **Your written responses to the KSA's** describing how your experience, education, training, and recognition distinguish you from other applicants. Your KSA responses are considered your **SUPPLEMENTAL STATEMENT**. Failure to address any of the KSA's listed in this announcement may result in a lower rating or disqualification. Non-Competitive applicants are encouraged to respond to the KSA's since this may support your qualification for this position or a selecting official's assessment and consideration.

#### **Also, follow these instructions if any of the following apply to you --**

\* All current Federal employees must provide a copy of their current Performance Appraisal. It must be dated within 15 months of the opening date of the announcement.

\* STATUS applicants and FORMER Federal employees eligible for reinstatement are requested to provide a copy of their most recent SF-50, Notification of Personnel Action.

\* Preference eligibles or veterans who have been separated under honorable conditions from the Armed Forces after completing 3 or more years of continuous active military service may compete for vacancies under merit promotion.

\* If you are claiming 5 point veterans preference, you must submit a DD-214. If you are claiming 10 points veterans preference based on a compensable service connected disability of 10 percent or more, you **MUST** submit a DD-214, SF-15 and letter from the Veterans Administration identifying the percentage of disability for preference determination. Additional information on veteran's preference is available in the Vet Guide available at <http://www.opm.gov/veterans/html/vetguide.htm>

\* Applicants who are eligible for a special hiring authority (e.g., VRA eligibles, severely disabled individuals, former Peace Corps and VISTA Volunteers, etc.) will be considered. Eligibility documentation should be provided by applicants. Clearly mark this request.

**\*\*Your application MUST BE RECEIVED BY C.O.B. (4:30 P.M.) ON THE CLOSING DATE** of this announcement. If you request forms late in the open period, your application must still be received by the closing date. No Extensions will be given.

We are sorry for any inconvenience that this may cause; however, due to mail being irradiated, we have no control over when we receive mail. The Human Resources Services Division staff want to ensure that your application package is timely and is considered for further processing.\*\*

**WHERE TO OBTAIN AND SUBMIT APPLICATIONS:**

USDA-OHRM-HRSD  
**ANNOUNCEMENT NO: OGC-03-11**  
STOP 9708, ROOM 2-W. JLW  
1400 INDEPENDENCE AVE SW  
WASHINGTON DC 20250-9708

Call the Personnel Operations Branch at (202) 720-5781 for additional information.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, NOTICES, AND REQUIREMENTS:**

**DISPLACED/SURPLUS EMPLOYEES:** Individuals who have special priority selection rights under the USDA Career Transition Assistance Program (CTAP) or the Interagency Career Transition Assistance Program (ICTAP) must be well qualified for the position to receive consideration for special priority selection. CTAP and ICTAP eligibles will be considered well qualified if that applicant meets the qualification standard and eligibility requirements for the position, meets minimum educational and experience requirements, meets all selective factors where applicable and is able to satisfactorily perform the duties of the position upon entry.

Federal employees seeking CTAP/ICTAP eligibility must submit proof that they meet the requirements of 5 CFR 330.605 (a) for CTAP and 5 CFR 330.704 for ICTAP. This includes a copy of the agency notice, a copy of their most recent Performance Rating and a copy of their most recent SF-50 noting current position, grade level, and duty location. Please annotate your application to reflect that you are applying as a CTAP or ICTAP eligible.

\* Ratings will be based on evaluation of your experience as it relates to the qualifications requirements and on the knowledge, skills, abilities (KSA's) listed. You should provide detailed evidence of the KSA's in your application in the form of clear, concise examples showing level of accomplishment and degree of responsibility. Qualified candidates will be assigned a score between 70 and 100, not including points that may be assigned for veterans preference.

\* If you are a current or former Federal employee with reinstatement eligibility for permanent appointment and wish to be considered under both merit promotion and competitive procedures must submit two (2) complete applications. If only one application is received, it will be considered under merit promotion procedures.

\* All qualification requirements must be met by the closing date of this announcement, this includes time-in-grade for status applicants.

\* Males born after 12/31/59 desiring Federal employment must be registered with the Selective Service System.

\* Most new appointments include a one-year probationary period requirement. For supervisory or managerial positions, candidates are subject to a probationary period unless prior supervisory or managerial experience is creditable.

\* The use of Federal Government postage-paid envelopes in filing applications is a violation of federal law and will disqualify you from consideration.

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Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's Target Center at 202-720-2600 (voice and TDD).

This agency provides reasonable accommodations to applicants with disabilities. If you need a reasonable accommodation for any part of the application and hiring process, please notify the agency. The decision on granting reasonable accommodation will be on a case-by-case basis.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all of its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.)

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 14th and Independence Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 OR CALL (202) 720-5964 (Voice or TDD).

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PROVIDER AND EMPLOYER.